What is claimed is:

1. A chain tensioner comprising a housing formed with a cylinder chamber, a plunger slidably mounted in said cylinder chamber, a spring mounted in said cylinder chamber and biasing said plunger outwardly of said cylinder chamber, and a retraction restrictor means provided between said housing and said plunger for preventing said plunger from retracting toward a closed end of said cylinder chamber over a predetermined distance, said housing being formed with an oil supply passage communicating with a pressure chamber defined in said cylinder chamber behind said plunger, whereby pushing force applied to said plunger is dampened by hydraulic oil supplied through said oil supply passage into said pressure chamber, characterized in that a ring fitting groove is formed in an outer periphery of said plunger at its portion near a rear end thereof which is located inside said cylinder chamber, that a radially elastically deformable elastic ring is received in said ring fitting groove in a radially compressed state, and that an engaging groove is formed in an inner periphery of said cylinder chamber near an open end thereof, said elastic ring being engageable in said engaging groove and being configured to radially expand in said engaging groove to such an extent that an inner diameter thereof is smaller than an outer diameter of said plunger.

2. The chain tensioner of claim 1 wherein said engaging groove has a tapered surface on its side near said closed end of said cylinder chamber.

3. A chain tensioner comprising a housing formed with a cylinder chamber, a plunger slidably mounted in said cylinder chamber, a spring

mounted in said cylinder chamber and biasing said plunger outwardly of said cylinder chamber, and a retraction restrictor means provided between said housing and said plunger for preventing said plunger from retracting toward a closed end of said cylinder chamber over a predetermined distance, said housing being formed with an oil supply passage communicating with a pressure chamber defined in said cylinder chamber behind said plunger, whereby pushing force applied to said plunger is dampened by hydraulic oil supplied through said oil supply passage into said pressure chamber, characterized in that a ring fitting groove is formed in an inner periphery of said cylinder chamber near an open end thereof, that a radially elastically deformable elastic ring is received in said ring fitting groove in a radially expanded state, and that an engaging groove is formed in an outer periphery of said plunger near a rear end thereof, said elastic ring being engageable in said engaging groove and being configured to be radially compressed in said engaging groove to such an extent that an outer diameter thereof is larger than an inner diameter of said cylinder chamber.

4. The chain tensioner of claim 3 wherein said engaging groove has a tapered surface on its side near a front end of said plunger.

5. The chain tensioner of any of claims 1 to 4 wherein said elastic ring is a C-shaped member having two separate ends and formed of a steel wire having a circular cross-section.

6. The chain tensioner of any of claims 1 to 4 wherein said elastic ring is made of a resin having excellent sliding properties.